

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A multi-beam optical scanning device comprising:

light source means which has plural  
5 luminescence parts arranged apart from each other in both a main-scanning direction and a sub-scanning direction;

a rotating polygon mirror which has reflection surfaces for deflecting plural light beams emitted  
10 from the plural luminescence parts, respectively;

a first optical system which is arranged in an optical path leading from the light source means to the rotating polygon mirror and converts the plural light beams into convergent light beams or divergent  
15 light beams; and

a third optical system which guides the plural light beams deflected by the rotating polygon mirror onto a surface to be scanned of a drum shape having a rotation axis along the main-scanning direction,

20 wherein, in a sub-scanning section, the respective light beams to be made incident on the surface to be scanned are made incident such that principal rays thereof form an angle with respect to a normal line of the surface to be scanned,

25 respectively, whereby when it is assumed that a maximum value of a positional deviation amount, which is generated in a first direction relatively parallel

to the main-scanning direction between focusing points of the respective light beams on the surface to be scanned, is  $\delta Y_1$ , a maximum value of a positional deviation amount, which is generated in a 5 second direction relatively parallel to the main-scanning direction between the focusing points of the respective light beams on the surface to be scanned as convergent light beams or divergent light beams are made incident on the third optical system in the 10 main scanning direction, is  $\delta Y_2$ , and a maximum value of a positional deviation amount, which, when the light beams emitted from the plural luminescence parts have a relative wavelength difference, is generated in a third direction relatively parallel to 15 the main-scanning direction between the focusing points of the respective light beams on the surface to be scanned due to the relative wavelength difference, is  $\delta Y_3$ , the following conditional expression is satisfied:

$$20 \quad |\delta Y_1 + \delta Y_2 + \delta Y_3| \leq \text{MAX}(|\delta Y_1|, |\delta Y_2|, |\delta Y_3|)$$

where,  $\text{MAX}(|\delta Y_1|, |\delta Y_2|, |\delta Y_3|)$  is a largest value of absolute values of  $\delta Y_1, \delta Y_2$  and  $\delta Y_3$ .

2. The multi-beam optical scanning device  
25 according to claim 1,  
wherein the following conditional expression is satisfied when the positional deviation amounts

$\delta Y_1$ ,  $\delta Y_2$  and  $\delta Y_3$  are represented by a unit of mm,  
respectively:

$$|\delta Y_1 + \delta Y_2 + \delta Y_3| \leq 0.014 \text{ (mm)}$$

5        3. The multi-beam optical scanning device  
according to claim 1,

      wherein the positional deviation amounts  $\delta Y_1$ ,  
 $\delta Y_2$  and  $\delta Y_3$  satisfy the following conditional  
expression:

10       $\delta Y_1 \times (\delta Y_2 + \delta Y_3) < 0$

4. A multi-beam optical scanning device  
comprising:

      light source means which has plural  
15      luminescence parts arranged apart from each other in  
both a main-scanning direction and a sub-scanning  
direction;

      a rotating polygon mirror which has reflection  
surfaces for deflecting plural light beams emitted  
20      from the plural luminescence parts, respectively;

      a first optical system which is arranged in an  
optical path leading from the light source means to  
the rotating polygon mirror and converts the plural  
light beams into convergent light beams or divergent  
25      light beams; and

      a third optical system which guides the plural  
light beams deflected by the rotating polygon mirror

onto a surface to be scanned of a drum shape having a rotation axis along the main-scanning direction,  
wherein, in a sub-scanning section, the  
respective light beams to be made incident on the  
surface to be scanned are made incident such that  
principal rays thereof form an angle with respect to  
a normal line of the surface to be scanned,  
respectively, whereby when it is assumed that a  
positional deviation is caused in a first direction  
relatively parallel to the main-scanning direction  
between focusing points of the respective light beams  
on the surface to be scanned, a positional deviation  
is caused in a second direction relatively parallel  
to the main-scanning direction between the focusing  
points of the respective light beams on the surface  
to be scanned as convergent light beams or divergent  
light beams are made incident on the third optical  
system in the main scanning direction, and, when the  
light beams emitted from the plural luminescence  
parts have a relative wavelength difference, a  
positional deviation is caused in a third direction  
relatively parallel to the main-scanning direction  
between the focusing points of the respective light  
beams on the surface to be scanned due to the  
relative wavelength difference, and  
a number of the plural luminescence parts is N,  
an average value of an angle formed by the

principal rays of the plural light beams emitted from the first optical system and the optical axis of the third optical system is  $\gamma$ ,

a focal length of the first optical system is  
5       $f_{col}$ ,

an interval of the plural luminescence parts is  $d$ ,

an average value of the angle which the principal rays of the plural light beams to be made  
10      incident on the surface to be scanned in the sub-scanning section forms with respect to the normal line of the surface to be scanned is  $\beta$ ,

a radius of a circle inscribed in the rotating polygon mirror is  $r$ ,

15      a maximum scanning angle of the plural light beams deflected and used for scanning by the rotating polygon mirror is  $\eta$ ,

an angle formed by the normal line of the surface to be scanned in the maximum scanning  
20      position of the plural light beams, which are used for scanning the surface to be scanned by the third optical system, and the plural light beams is  $\theta_{max}$ ,

a maximum value of the relative wavelength difference of the plural light beams emitted from the  
25      plural luminescence parts is  $\delta\lambda$ ,

a distance from a light outgoing side principal plane of the third optical system to a natural

convergent point of the convergent light beams or the divergent light beams converted by the first optical system is  $S_d$ ,

a distance from the light outgoing side

5 principal plane of the third optical system to a position, in which the convergent light beams or the divergent light beams converted by the first optical system are converged and focused by the third optical system, is  $S_k$ ;

10 an  $f\theta$  coefficient of the third optical system is  $f$ , and

an interval of focusing points in the sub-scanning direction on the surface to be scanned of the plural light beams determined from a resolution

15 is  $P$ ,

the following conditional expression is satisfied:

[Expression 15]

$$\left| P(N-1) \sin \beta \tan \theta_{\max} - \left( \frac{r \tan \frac{\eta}{2} \frac{d(N-1)}{2f_{col}} \left( \cos \left( 2 \arctan \frac{d(N-1)}{2f_{col}} \right) + \cos \gamma \tan \eta \right)}{\sin \left( \frac{\gamma}{2} + \frac{\eta}{2} \right)} \frac{S_k}{S_d} + 9.5\delta\lambda f \right) \right| \leq 0.014$$

20 5. The multi-beam optical scanning device according to claim 1,

wherein both the second direction and the third direction are directions opposite to the first direction.

6. The multi-beam optical scanning device according to claim 1, further comprising a second optical system which focuses the plural light beams, which have passed through the first optical system,  
5 on the reflection surfaces of the rotating polygon mirror in a linear shape extending in the main-scanning direction.

7. An image forming apparatus comprising:  
10 the multi-beam optical scanning device according to any one of claims 1 to 6;  
a photosensitive member arranged on the surface to be scanned;  
a developing device which develops an  
15 electrostatic latent image, which is formed on the photosensitive member by a light beam used for scanning in the multi-beam optical scanning device, as a toner image;  
a transfer device which transfers the developed  
20 toner image onto a material to have an image transferred thereon; and  
a fixing device which fixes the transferred toner image to the material to have an image transferred thereon.

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8. An image forming apparatus comprising:  
the multi-beam optical scanning device

according to any one of claims 1 to 6; and  
a printer controller which converts code data  
inputted from an external device into an image signal  
and inputs the image signal to the multi-beam optical  
5 scanning device.

9. A color image forming apparatus comprising  
plural image bearing members which are arranged on  
the surfaces to be scanned of the multi-beam optical  
10 scanning devices according to any one of claims 1 to  
6, respectively, and form images of colors different  
from each other.

10. The color image forming apparatus according  
15 to claim 9, further comprising a printer controller  
which converts color signals inputted from an  
external device into image data of different colors  
and inputs the image data to the respective multi-  
beam optical scanning devices.